

At page 45, line 23, replace "AD.4)" with --AD.4---.
At page 50, line 7, replace "FEL.DEF" with --REL.DEF--.
At page 50, line 10, replace "REF.DEF" with --REL.DEF--.
At page 53, line 9, replace "entity. (i.e.) with --entity
(i.e.)
At page 55, line 1, replace "applicationprogram" with
--application program--.
At page 57, line 9, replace "question,?.??" with
--question, ?.??--.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 1-14 without prejudice.

Please add the following new claims:

--15. A method for retrieving a desired entity of a
desired entity type from a relational database, wherein said
desired entity is related to a provided entity by a provided
relation type associating an entity type of said provided
entity with said desired entity type, said method comprising:

 retrieving a specific relation type record defining
 said provided relation type from a relation definition
 table;

 retrieving a specific relation instance record
 defining a relation of said provided relation type between
 said provided entity and said desired entity from a
 relation instance table corresponding to said specific
 relation type record;

 retrieving a desired entity type record containing
 said desired entity type from an entity definition table,
 wherein said desired entity type record specifies a
 desired entity instance table associated with said desired
 entity type; and

 retrieving said desired entity from said desired
 entity instance table.

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26. The method of claim *15*, wherein said relation instance record specifies said desired entity by said desired entity type and a desired record identifier.

27. The method of claim *26*, wherein said desired entity is identified by said desired record identifier in said desired entity instance table.

28. The method of claim *15*, wherein said retrieving a specific relation type record defining said provided relation type from a relation definition table comprises:

retrieving a table identifier for said relation instance table from said specific relation type record;
and

retrieving said specific relation instance record from said relation instance table based on said specific relation type record and said provided entity.

29. The method of claim *25*, further comprising retrieving data specifying said provided relation type from an inquiry table.

30. The method of claim *25*, further comprising retrieving data specifying said provided entity from an inquiry table.

31. The method of claim *25*, further comprising retrieving a second desired entity type record containing a second desired entity type from said entity definition table, wherein said second desired entity type record specifies a second desired entity instance table associated with said second desired entity type.

32. The method of claim *21*, further comprising retrieving a third desired entity type record containing a third desired

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entity type from said entity definition table, wherein said third desired entity type record specifies a third desired entity instance table associated with said third desired entity type.

9. 25. The method of claim 18, further comprising retrieving a second specific relation instance record defining a second relation of said provided relation type between said provided entity and said desired entity from a second relation instance table corresponding to said second specific relation type record.

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10. 24. A relational database processing system comprising:
an entity definition table containing a first entity type record defining a first entity type;
an first entity instance table associated with said first entity type;
a plurality of entity instance records stored in said first entity instance table;
a relation definition table containing a first relation type record defining a provided relation type;
a first relation instance table associated with said provided relation type; and
a first relation instance record of said provided relation type, said first relation instance record relating a desired entity in one of said entity instance records to a provided entity.

11. 25. The relational database processing system of claim 10, 24, wherein each of said entity instance records is identified by a record identifier.

12. 26. The relational database processing system of claim 10, 24, wherein said first relation contains a desired record

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identifier and a desired entity type corresponding to a desired entity instance record containing said desired entity.

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 10 21. The relational database processing system of claim
 24, wherein said first relation type record comprises a table identifier identifying said first relation instance table.

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 10 22. The relational database processing system of claim
 24, further comprising an inquiry table containing an inquiry record, wherein said inquiry record specifies said provided relation type and said provided entity.

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 23. The relational database processing system of claim 24
 further comprising:

a second entity instance table associated with a second entity type; and

wherein said entity definition table contains a second entity type record containing said second entity type and associating said second entity instance table with said second entity type.

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 20. The relational database processing system of claim 24
 further comprising:

a third entity instance table associated with a third entity type; and

wherein said entity definition table contains a third entity type record containing said third entity type and associating said third entity instance table with said third entity type.

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 21. The relational database processing system of claim 24
 further comprising:

a second relation instance table associated with a second entity type; and

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